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SUBJECT: FINLAND: POSSIBLE RWANDAN GENOCIDE TRIAL

¶11. (U) Summary: On February 5, local media reported that Finnish police referred their investigation of genocide charges against a Rwandan resident in Finland for prosecution. Finnish officials investigated the charges after the Rwandan applied for asylum in Finland. Officials allege that the suspect is responsible for mass killings of 5,000 to 25,000 people; charges he denies. The small Rwandan community in Finland offered no protest or public response to the police referral. The Finnish government rejected the Rwandan government's extradition request. The case may go to trial as soon as late March. End summary.

Discovery of Genocide Allegations

¶12. (SBU) On February 5, the Finnish Press reported the culmination of an investigation by the Finnish National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) into Francois Uzaramba (aka Bazaramba), a Rwandan-born resident suspected of taking part in the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. Prior media reports on the arrest noted that Finnish investigators first visited the crime scene in February 2007 and viewed evidence termed "overwhelming." In May 2007, two Finnish police reportedly traveled to Rwanda to gather evidence, with cooperation from Rwandan and UN authorities, including interviews of more than 100 people in Rwanda, Kenya, Tanzania, Burundi, Congo, Malawi, Zambia and South Africa. Media reports have estimated the number of deaths at 5,000 to 25,000. (Note: Under Finnish law, the charge of genocide carries no requirement of a minimum number of victims. End note.) NBI also worked with the U.S. Department of Justice, Special Investigations Department. Officials have not alleged how Uzaramba accomplished the 1994 mass killings, but have described Human Rights Watch's reporting of the events as nearly accurate. Some press reports allege that Uzaramba led one massacre and abetted another, in the area of Nyakizu Hill in the former Butare Province, Rwanda. At the culmination of the investigation, NBI submitted 4,000 pages of investigation material to the state prosecutor for use in a possible trial.

Suspect Remains in Finland

¶13. (SBU) Uzaramba, in Finnish prison since April 2007, denies the charges against him. The Finnish Ministry of Justice has started the Finnish trial preparation process. A trial could start in late March. Rwanda has no extradition treaty with Finland, but Rwandan authorities asked for extradition in this case. The Finnish Ministry of Justice (MOJ) said that Finland will not extradite the Rwandan man based on decisions made last year by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), when it rejected three requests to return defendants to Rwanda because it was not satisfied that they would receive a fair trial. Based on a

February 6 conversation with a Finnish NBI official, Rwanda could conceivably continue with a separate legal process. In the same conversation, the Finnish official noted that Finland rejected Uzaramba's request for asylum. He has appealed.

¶4. (SBU) Finnish officials confirmed to PolAsst that Uzaramba will remain in custody pending and during trial and if convicted, serve his sentence in Finland. Finnish law (Penal Code, Chapter 11, War Crimes and Offenses Against Humanity Section 1 Genocide) provides penalties from four years to life imprisonment. Finland implemented the UN Genocide Convention within the Finnish Penal Code and the law applies to offenses committed outside of the country. Finnish officials noted that the statute is not common among European countries, not even EU member states.

Uzaramba (aka Bazaramba)

¶5. (SBU) According to media reports, Uzaramba moved to Finland in 2003. He reportedly was a leading figure in the Rwandan Baptist Church and believed to be personally acquainted with President Juvenal Habyarimana. Uzaramba's wife also resides in Finland. Finland has a very small Rwandan community, roughly 39 residents; the community has not publicly responded to the allegations against Uzaramba.

BUTLER